



## ***AOT in Action***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

### **A Message from Director Sherry Henry:**

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Good afternoon,

Our ePostcard campaign, [Arizona Calling – Share Something Amazing](http://www.arizonaguide.com/experience-and-share/epostcard), is gaining momentum! Help us spread the word about this wonderful campaign by sending the following link to everyone you know: <http://www.arizonaguide.com/experience-and-share/epostcard>. It's a fun and easy way to invite friends and family to the Grand Canyon State.

As Arizona's number one export-oriented industry, tourism contributes significantly to our state's economic vitality. [Share Something Amazing](http://www.arizonaguide.com/experience-and-share/epostcard) with your friends and family because the more visitors who experience Arizona as a travel destination, the more we benefit from tourism.

Be part of this exciting campaign and send personalized ePostcards to everyone you know!

Have a great week,

Sherry Henry  
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism

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### **AOT News**

#### **Join us in Prescott for the Largest Community Celebration in Arizona's 100-Year History!**

In the first of three Arizona Best Fest events to occur throughout the state, the Arizona Best Fest in Prescott will encompass the largest event footprint in the city's history. Pavilions and villages will include great displays and hands-on activities for everyone! Other features include the Family Fun Zone, the Salute program, the 'best of Arizona' food & beverages, plus local and national entertainment.

A special ceremony to open the festival will be the official unveiling of the USPS Commemorative Arizona Centennial Stamp. Dignitaries attending include Governor Brewer, Prescott Mayor Kuykendall, USPS representatives and the Arizona artist who designed the stamp.

The Arizona Best Fest Series, driven by Arizona history, cultures, industries, natural resources, military action and innovations, leads the march to Arizona's 100 Years celebration.

For more information on the Arizona Best Fest Series visit [www.az100years.org](http://www.az100years.org).

### **New Update to AOT's Research Web site!**

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

- Gross Sales & Tourism Taxes June 2011
- State Parks Visitation June 2011
- National Parks Visitation May 2011 (preliminary)
- National, Regional, Arizona Lodging July 2011
- County Lodging July 2011
- National, Regional, Arizona Lodging Q2 2011
- County Lodging Q2 2011

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at [melkins@azot.gov](mailto:melkins@azot.gov).

### **First Vancouver Media Marketplace Great Success!**

The Arizona Office of Tourism hosted a successful Vancouver Media Marketplace Tuesday August 16. Attended by 36 journalists and freelancers, the inaugural event took place at Hawksworth Restaurant in downtown Vancouver, BC. To promote travel to Arizona and capitalize on the continually growing Canadian market, statewide partners including Chandler, Flagstaff, Mesa, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Sedona and Tempe joined AOT. Arizona prize package getaways were raffled and presented to two lucky journalists. AOT thanks the attending partners for providing generous prize package items and to all who contributed to the success of this event. For more information, please contact Kara Woroniec at 602-364-3715 or via email at [kworoniec@azot.gov](mailto:kworoniec@azot.gov).

### **Welcome to the Neighborhood!**

AOT welcomes Gioia Danesi-Goodrum, President CEO/ Tourism Marketing, Williams-Grand Canyon Chamber of Commerce and Estelle Bryant, Executive Director, Ajo District Chamber of Commerce to the Arizona Tourism Industry. We look forward to promoting the Great State of Arizona with you!

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## **Upcoming Events & Activities**

### France Media Mission

Date: September 12 – 16

Location: Paris, France

### Montreal Media Mission

Date: September 27– 28

Location: Montreal, QB

### Discover America Day - Canada

Date: October 3

Location: Toronto, ON

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## Industry News

### **Grand Canyon to Celebrate Birth of the National Park Service**

The public is invited to join in the celebration of the 95th birthday of the National Park Service (NPS) on Thursday, August 25, 2011 at Grand Canyon National Park where special programs will highlight the National Park Service's mission and history.

The NPS was created to "promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments and reservations..." and "...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." (1916 Organic Act)

Today there are nearly 400 park units across the United States; and the NPS' more than 20,000 employees work diligently to preserve, protect, and share them with the public. Within Grand Canyon National Park, almost 500 of those employees protect not only the park's geologic landscape and spectacular views, but endangered species like the humpback chub <http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/shinumotransloc.htm>, the sentry milk vetch <http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/astragalus.htm>, and the California condor <http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/california-condors.htm>.

Thursday's celebration will include programs that share the history and mission of the NPS as well as the exploration, history and value of Grand Canyon National Park. Programs will be offered throughout the day and include guided hikes, history presentations and performances.

For more on Grand Canyon's Founders Day Celebration, please contact Supervisory Ranger Libby Schaaf at 928-638-7641, [Libby\\_Schaaf@nps.gov](mailto:Libby_Schaaf@nps.gov). For more on how Grand Canyon became a national park, visit our web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/historyculture/adhigrca.htm>; and for information on visiting Grand Canyon National Park, please call 928-638-7888 or visit us on the web at [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca).

### **IATA Reports Premium, Economy Air Travel Growth Slowed in June**

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) said growth rates for passenger numbers travelling on premium and economy seats in June dropped back from the levels seen in May. Compared to the same month last year, premium travel in June was up by 6.4 percent, while economy travel rose 4.8 percent. IATA said although the overall level of passenger numbers fell month-to-month, the growth trend is still upward. It is likely that the slowing passenger number growth rates are reflecting slower world trade growth and weakening business confidence.

According to IATA, premium travel has typically grown in line with developed country international trade, which has been a good proxy for the drivers of business travel. The rate of growth of that trade has declined from high single digits in the second half of 2010 to mid single digits during 2011 so far. A good leading indicator for premium travel has been business confidence, another driver of business travel, which has been declining over the last several months to now rest on the borderline between output expansion and contraction which will also be dampening growth.

The level of economy travel declined slightly in June after sharp increases in April and May. Even so, economy passenger numbers are 4 percent higher than the high point before the recession. There is volatility in the data month-to-month, but the absence of a sharp downward movement in June following the recent rises increases the likelihood that economy passenger numbers are now being less affected by high fuel prices. But IATA said more time is needed to see whether the trend in air travel has recovered from the recent soft patch. (*Travel Pulse, August 16*)

### **AH&LA Reports Increased Profits for U.S. Lodging Industry**

The U.S. lodging industry generated 2010 pre-tax profits of \$18 billion on sales of \$127.7 billion, up from profits of \$16 billion on sales of \$127.2 billion in 2009, according to the American Hotel & Lodging Association's Lodging Industry Profile statistical analysis. The 2010 results contributed to an overall \$759 billion in tourism sales, according to the report, with resident and international travelers' U.S. expenditures estimated at \$2 billion per day or \$86.6 million per hour.

The report also found that the percentage of international travelers to the U.S. grew by 9 percent from 54.9 million in 2009, to a record 59.7 million in 2010. The top 10 countries in terms of U.S. arrivals for 2010 were Canada (20 million), Mexico (13.4 million), the United Kingdom (3.9 million), Japan (3.4 million), Germany (1.7 million), France (1.3 million), Brazil (1.2 million), South Korea (1.1 million), Australia (904,000), and Italy (838,000), which together accounted for 80 percent of international visitors.

"After several years of declining sales, streamlining budgets, and leaner staffs, 2010 finally was the industry's transitional year," said Joe McNerney, president and CEO of the American Hotel & Lodging Association. "Although it didn't happen as quickly as many had hoped, the numbers show that our cyclical industry has officially transitioned back to the road of profitability." The travel and tourism industry pays \$188 billion in travel-related wages and salaries and employs 1.76 million hotel property workers, the report found. For more information, visit [www.ahla.com](http://www.ahla.com). (*Travel Pulse, August 18*)

### **Travel Industry Accounts for More Than 1 in 10 Jobs Created in 2011**

“The Labor Department reports the economy added a modest 117,000 jobs last month, while the unemployment rate remained essentially unchanged at 9.1 percent. Employment gains were rather lackluster across most industries. Posting a slowdown from the 30,000 jobs created in June, the travel industry added 9,200 jobs in July. However, through the first seven months of 2011, travel industry employment has expanded by 106,000 to a level of 7.5 million workers, accounting for 11.4 percent of the total jobs created so far this year.

“Still, the fact that close to 14 million Americans remain unemployed shows that the recovery needs to pick up steam. As we have already seen this year, the travel industry is one of the most efficient job engines in the U.S. economy, creating twice as many jobs as the rest of the private sector for any given increase in output. And a healthy travel industry is poised to help the very people who are currently out of work.

“Increasing the amount of international travelers to the U.S. through an improved U.S. visa system will create jobs. Travelers from China, India and Brazil collectively spent close to \$15 billion in the U.S. in 2010, which supported 105,800 U.S. jobs. Barriers, like visa delays, that discourage travel to the U.S. must be removed so we can enjoy the economic impact of these travelers.”

The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry that generates \$1.8 trillion in economic output and supports 14.1 million jobs. U.S. Travel's mission is to increase travel to and within the United States. For more information, visit [www.usta.org](http://www.usta.org). (*Travel Industry Wire, August 8*)

### **Strength in International Inbound Travel Continues**

According to the [U.S. Department of Commerce](http://www.dhs.gov), 5.5 million international visitors traveled to the United States in April 2011, a 13 percent increase over April 2010. Travel originating from overseas was up substantially (+24%). Increases were posted in seven of the nine overseas regions, with declines of four percent in travel to the U.S. from Asia and one percent from the Caribbean. For the first four months of 2011, visitation (18.4 million) was up 5 percent compared to the same period in 2010, and 8 percent (7.8 million) among overseas visitors. International visitors spent \$12.5 billion in April 2011, 20 percent more than in April 2010. During the first four months of 2011, international visitors spent 13 percent more than they did during the first four months of 2010. (*U.S. Travel Outlook, August*)

### **Business Travel Recovery Still Underway**

Business travel spending and volume remained steady in Q2 2011, according to the [Global Business Travel Association](http://www.gbta.com) (GBTA). Spending reached an estimated \$62.2 billion, up 6.3 percent compared to Q2 2010. Travel prices are on the rise, with increases expected to continue throughout the rest of 2011 and to be in the 4.5 to 5 percent range. So far in 2011, it is estimated that when adjusted for price increases, spending on business trips will remain relatively flat; companies will keep travelers on the road at a similar pace to 2010, but are paying more per trip due to higher rates. Also, U.S. companies are upping their investment in international travel. Total spend on trips abroad is estimated to hit \$31.8 billion in 2011, a 9.1 percent increase over 2010 and a substantially higher rate of increase than total spending growth. (

### **Despite Challenges, Optimism about Travel Builds**

Despite the economic “soft patch” and ongoing challenges, there is general optimism that both business and leisure travel will continue to improve. The latest edition of [The Pegasus View](#) reports that summer travel has been strong. The corporate hotel market saw global bookings increase 8.8 percent in June. Suggesting the durability of corporate travel demand is the on-going rise in average daily rate (ADR). Globally, ADR has steadfastly grown by more than 5 percent this year over last. Global leisure bookings also grew 7.3 percent over the prior year.

Global distribution services (GDS) forward-looking global data shows corporate travel forging ahead. Bookings show potential for growing at a pace of up 15 percent over the summer, with possible stronger growth for the autumn conference season. ADR looks to continue solid growth over the prior year through September, with the potential for easing up in October and November. Alternative distribution site (ADS) channel forward-looking global data points to more positive news for leisure travel too. Bookings look to grow by nearly 10 percent over the prior year through the second quarter and rates show a healthy growth too. (*U.S. Travel Outlook, August*)

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### **Calendar of Events**

Visit [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

### **Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!**

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